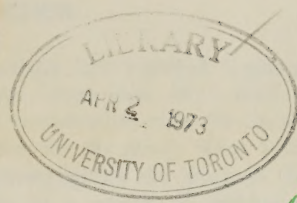


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community crafts

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community crafts:

Reflections on the Project as a Model for
Community Development

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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BRANCH
MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL SERVICES

INTRODUCTION

The Community Crafts project began in August 1970 in the Grange Park community of Toronto. From June 1971 until January 1972, the Community Development Branch, in co-operation with the Ontario Craft Foundation, provided a worker to act as an enabler for the group. What follows are the worker's reflections on the process of development within the group as the project was carried out. The report looks at the project as a means of self-actualization for the individual group members; discusses the development and maintenance of group goals, as well as tension and conflict resolution. The report deals with some of the problems encountered in project management: control of finances, development of an administrative structure etc., and chronicles the development of the group into a self-sufficient, independent organization. Significantly, the report shows how self-actualization and the development of group consciousness led to a greater degree of participation in community affairs on the part of some group members. For these reasons the report lends itself to consideration as a case study in community development.

THE GRANGE PARK COMMUNITY

The Grange Park area of downtown Toronto is an area in transition. At one time, it was a well established residential area of smaller homes. Today, however, as the downtown core of Toronto expands westward the land on which its houses stand has become extremely valuable and strong pressures are being exerted to change the form of the community.

Although the homes in the neighbourhood are between 50 and 100 years old, most are still in relatively good shape. However, between 1961 and 1966 there was a 30 percent reduction in the number of dwelling units. Since 1966, a large number of houses have been torn down and during this time the size of the population remained stable. Only living space is getting smaller.

Further signs of the transition that the Grange Park area is undergoing can be seen in the developments being planned for the area. Both the size and the style of these developments will have a significant impact on the neighbourhood.

Encroaching
development

There are plans for a three high-rise tower complex. (complete with two theatres, boutiques and roof garden), to be built between McCaul and St. Patrick Street. No mention has been made of including low-income family units which are badly needed in the community.

A trust company has also assembled a block of land bounded by Sullivan, Huron, Soho and Beverley Streets, and has properties as well on the north side of Sullivan and Phoebe Streets for possible future development.

Land
assemblage

The Ontario Hydro has assembled a square block (40 houses) bounded by Beverley, Baldwin, Cecil and Henry Streets, and has been planning to build a transformer station for central Toronto. It appears now there is a possibility Hydro may turn the block over to the Ontario Housing Corporation for low-rental housing for people in the neighbourhood.

There is considerable evidence of "block busting" in the neighbourhood. Vacated and deteriorating houses, empty garbage-filled lots, as well as clusters of occupied houses abound. As developers tear down houses, they have left adjoining houses standing, but damaged. Damages include leaking roofs, cracked walls, broken fences and sidewalks, and plugged sewers.

The Art Gallery of Ontario is expanding to McCaul Street and in doing so will take open space away from the areas' only park.

With redevelopment taking this form not only will the area be significantly changed in shape and form, but the whole pattern of life of existing residents will disappear. Already, the physical deterioration and erosion process described above has had a strong impact on the residents remaining and contributes heavily to their feelings of anomie and powerlessness.

SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

About half the population in the community is Chinese. Others include: Maritimers, English, Canadian-Indian, Americans, some Portuguese, Italians and older Jews. (The area was mainly Jewish in the 1920's). The neighbourhood has always been a receiving centre for immigrants and migrants. There is a large student youth and transient population, although middle-class people are starting to move in and "renovate". The average income of people living within this area is around \$4,000.

A sense of worry and anxiety prevails among people who have very little money or power. Many of the Chinese people work long hours in the restaurants and shops in Chinatown a few blocks away for low wages. Employment for many people is marginal and not permanent. They are messengers, apartment superintendents, house cleaners, factory workers (on Spadina Avenue), car washers, etc. There is a very low skill level and little job security. People will go from job to job to unemployment insurance or welfare.

There are also many large single-parent families, mostly on mother's allowance. These parents might also do odd jobs to supplement their low income. (However, they are only allowed to earn \$24 monthly and an additional \$12 for each child under 16).

Community
recreation

Recreational facilities for children and their parents, in the area are found at the University Settlement which has an after-school program for children, a gym and pool, a music school, and offers information services for Chinese people. Throughout the neighbourhood, there are also a number of Chinese cultural centres, dramatic societies, and churches which offer recreational activities.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY CRAFTS

A. THE BEGINNING

Community Crafts began with four women, all long-time residents of Grange Park. They knew each other and me through the University Settlement, where I taught art.

When I began to talk to them about using their craft skills (knittings, sewing, crocheting, macrame) to get people together and start talking to their neighbours, and also to make some extra money, they were all ambivalent and said, "Yes, it would be nice, but . . .". It took us a long time to get used to the idea and to realize that it was a very plausible one, and could be tried. The four women spoke to a few people they knew in the neighbourhood, and new women joined the group. They set up weekly meetings and got into incredible fights about welfare and racial origins, people's abilities, and members not wanting to share responsibilities. As a result people frequently lost their tempers and quit temporarily.

There was a great deal of insecurity and an "it will never work" feeling for a very long time. Just holding people together was a major effort and the building of a group identity took an even longer time.

The women in the group now number sixteen. (7 Chinese, 3 Nova Scotians, 2 Newfoundlanders, 2 Canadian Indians, 1 German and 1 native Torontonians). The backgrounds, life-styles and ways of thinking of the women are as diverse as this indicates.

B. PROGRESS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Between August 1970 and March 1971, the accomplishments of the women in Community Crafts were relatively small, because there was no money to get the project underway. The main task was to try to obtain funds for the start-up expenses. Letters were written and interviews took place. Government officials at all levels thought the idea was good but no funds were forthcoming. Finally in late February 1971, a grant for \$2,000 from the Community Development Branch of the then Department of the Provincial Secretary and Citizenship, was approved. That was the first major accomplishment.

Need for
seed money

During early March, news of the grant filtered through the neighbourhood and for three consecutive weeks, between thirty and forty Chinese women, practically none English-speaking, came to the meetings. In one woman's small livingroom on Grange Avenue. The group decided that it was impossible to accommodate most of these women because they had to organize themselves first. Only two of those women remained in the group.

Effect of
grant on the
rest of the
community

During May of 1971 the group participated in the Sheridan College Spring Craft Sale. They sold very little, but it was a good learning experience. It was the first time they had written out bills of sale, set up a display, talked to the public, and handled money. Also, the group had previously joined the Ontario Craft Foundation and received some orders from the Fall 1970 and Spring 1971 Gift Shows.

In June, 1971, I began working full-time with these women with the objective of helping them to become a self-sufficient group that could produce, organize and sell their own crafts. They also wanted training in management, bookkeeping, buying materials, and making and selling crafts. They wanted to know how and where to contact boutique owners, and how to use other community resources.

The enabler's
role

Lack of self
image and
group
responsibility

Together with learning such management and production skills, they also needed to learn about themselves and each other. They had to realize that if they weren't responsible to each other their group would fall apart. They had to learn to take criticism, have confidence in their work, and to resolve the many problems confronting them on a day-to-day basis.

Failure of
enabler's
proposed
administrative
structure and
the emergence
of indigenous
leadership

At first, I tried to impose a structure on them and their weekly meetings. They were told how setting up and following an agenda, taking minutes, giving reports with the president chairing meetings, might solve many of their problems. At that time, they wandered from point to point, avoiding making decisions, and leaving their meetings feeling they were not doing anything.

They tried that kind of structure for a month, then rejected it completely. They felt nervous and uncomfortable having to deal with taking turns talking, writing out minutes (spelling and writing difficulties), reports, etc. The alternative was a rather unstructured "free for all" meeting situation. Slowly, between August and September, a leader began to emerge. She didn't want to do things alone, so they structured it their way, by deciding to appoint a manager-bookkeeper and a manager-secretary. In June, a buyer of materials was appointed, and she has retained that job since.

Group
reluctance to
contact
"outside
buyers" and
enabler's
"covering"
response
until con-
fidence
emerged

The group knew that someone had to sell the crafts they made, but nobody wanted to do it. Everyone found excuses. In June I began to call some boutiques and made appointments to show the crafts. Together with the strongest and most interested member of the group, I went to the boutiques. She began to learn how to "make small talk", explain the reasons for forming the group, show the crafts, listen to reactions, and handle orders. A lot of small mistakes were made in the beginning mixing up orders, not sending high-quality goods, errors in invoices, insurance and packing).

C. THE CANADIAN NATIONAL EXHIBITION, 1971

Also in June, it was decided to exhibit and sell the crafts that the group made at The Canadian National Exhibition (C.N.E.). Two members met with the Director of The Arts and Crafts Building, who gave them use of a booth free, if they would demonstrate quilt-making and macrame. They were then confronted with the need to do a great deal of planning. They had to decide what would sell, how many of each item had to be made, and how much to charge.

Production
schedules:
group mis-
trust of
"middle
class" ad-
ministrative
requirements

The group manager asked the women to set up their own production schedules for making their crafts and bring them every week until the C.N.E. opened. No one wanted to operate that way. But at the last minute, more than enough items were brought.

July was taken up solely with preparations for the C.N.E. booth. Insurance was obtained, wholesale and retail price lists were printed, the booth designed, a provincial sales tax license and a lottery license were applied for and received, a post office box was rented, bank account at the C.N.E. opened, and TTC tickets bought for the group.

Excitement began to show as the project started to take shape. The women met at the Arts and Crafts Building to discuss the number of shelves, counters, and showcases they wanted. It was decided to raffle a patch-work quilt they had made to raise extra money.

C.N.E. "task" forces group to evolve own administrative structure in order to meet goals

Schedules had to be written for people to man the booth. The group made the decision to pay people \$1.00 an hour plus transportation to and from the C.N.E. Free passes were provided which allowed them to come and go as they pleased. Instruction sheets included information on handling cash, deposits to the bank, sales books, downpayments on orders, guest book (for people who wanted further information), and raffle tickets.

In the beginning of August, all members brought their crafts to a meeting where everything was labelled with "Community Crafts - Handmade in Canada" tags and priced. At that point, members were not as concerned with controlling the quality of crafts as they are now. They added up the retail value of the merchandise to be sold and the total was over \$2,000.

There was considerable feeling that the group should lower their prices at the C.N.E. The Ontario Craft Foundation advised them not to do this because they would under-cut the boutiques they had been selling to. However it was finally agreed that they would lower the prices on some items during the last week of the exhibition.

Unfortunately, 1971 was a slow year money-wise at the C.N.E. for everyone who had booths or concessions, so it wasn't a financial success. However, the planning, organizing and implementing experience was excellent for the group. There were very few problems and they learned a great deal. Crafts were sold, contacts were made and many people met. The experience brought the women much closer together. They had prepared for a big event, carried it through and, in their discussion of problems later on, found that by talking things over and achieving compromises, they could operate more successfully.

Fostering of a group identity and development of rational conflict resolution techniques

Naturally, problems were encountered in a project of this magnitude. These included an argument about equalizing the selling hours each member had reserved. In the beginning, some weren't as interested in selling. Later, when they realized that they were missing out on money and excitement, they began to ask if they could work more hours.

The group summed up the C.N.E. experience in this way: "It wasn't a help to us in a financial way, but what we lost in that, we gained in valuable experience which could not be obtained out of a book or someone coming and telling us this is how it should be done."

D. THE FALL OF 1971

During early September, the group finally decided they needed a manager. The member who had the most knowledge of how to operate the business didn't want all of the responsibilities, didn't want to go places alone, or use the telephone much. It

Evolution of an administrative structure responsive to group needs

was decided finally that she would do managing and bookkeeping and another woman would help her, doing the secretarial work and the telephoning.

Expanding
business
operations

Two quilts had to be made to fill orders. The patchwork quilt was made at the University Settlement, because there was a large room and storage space available at that time. The goose-down quilt was made by one person because the work was very hard to do and nobody else wanted to lend a hand.

The pros and cons of consigning merchandise across the U.S.A. border were discussed when a shop from Buffalo became interested in the group through the C.N.E. They sent a quilt and some dolls and received payment a few weeks later.

The Ontario Craft Foundation rented a booth in the National Gift Show scheduled for early October 1971, and invited the group to display their merchandise. Preparations for it began in September. New items were sent to the O.C.F. to be passed by their jury of retailers and craftsmen. Applications had to be filled out, a new membership paid, and new stock prepared.

During October, orders from the Gift Show were filled. Some members and I met with a reporter from The Toronto Star Weekly magazine, who wanted to do a story on the group. What happened will be discussed later in this report. A representative from The National Council of Jewish Women came to a meeting to discuss selling the groups' crafts at a party to help raise money for the Council and the group. This was eventually done and new contacts and sales were made.

Wholesale price lists were sent to boutiques in Toronto, retail price lists were sent to people who signed the guest book at the C.N.E., and flyers and letters were sent to old customers. This was done in preparation for possible Christmas orders.

Reaction to
enabler's
impending
withdrawal
from project

At the end of October, my contract to work with the group was to be terminated. The women felt however that if I could assist them for a few more months, through pre-Christmas problems, etc., they would be more prepared to be on their own. It was decided they would write a brief to the Community Development Branch, completely on their own, to ask for an extension of my contract. They met with the Executive Director of the Community Services Division and were successful in their attempts. I received a three-month extension.

The latter part of October, all of November and the beginning of December were used for making appointments with managers of stores, selling crafts and filling orders.

Setback

In early November, the Federal Department of Manpower and Immigration announced their Local Initiatives Program, which was to provide winter work for groups of unemployed people who had formed projects for community betterment. Community Crafts decided to apply for funds which would enable them to employ 17 people to make, sell, and teach crafts, and to set up a day care centre and craft shop in the neighbourhood. In late December, the groups' request was turned down. A form letter was received with no written reasons for denial of funds.

An article on the group was published in The Toronto Star Weekly. Although the article was inaccurate, 85 letters of enthusiastic response from all over Canada were received, asking for information and flyers. Four money orders for purses were also included. Everyone was amazed at the friendliness of the letters, and had great fun identifying the towns they came from. Every request was answered by letter with a flyer.

Effect of
publicity

Each time the sales people went to stores with crafts, they found it easier and easier. There was always surprise at how nice most people are, and how willing they are to listen, look and order (or display crafts on consignment). They also finally accepted the fact that some people like some crafts better than others. Some items they were sure would sell in one store, weren't even considered, but others were. They learned from experiences with managers to show a variety of crafts. They have begun to enjoy chatting on the phone with friendly managers.

Group becomes
accustomed to
selling their
products

We also tried to contact the area M.P. to talk about the Local Initiatives Program (L.I.P.) refusal to provide funds. In the end, we talked to the president of a riding association who said it was a shame the group hadn't gotten in touch with him before they presented their application. He could have shown them "how to package their brief". The women were then advised by the M.P. to re-apply for the L.I.P. Project. They were also told to expand on points in their brief that were not as clear as they could have been.

Encounters
with prepower
structure

The art of
grantsmanship

Store managers were contacted in the beginning of January to ask if they wanted to re-order merchandise. Most said they would be interested in late January or early February as the "January Sales" were currently in progress. Preparation for the Spring Gift Show (O.C.F.) began and new ideas will be presented to the jury again.

E. SUCCESSES AND FAILURES

Throughout these last eight months there have been many accomplishments as well as many set backs and failures.

As far as setting an objective and realizing a goal, the C.N.E. is a perfect example. The women made the decision to do this project, prepared for it, carried it out, and learned a great deal from it. A very important outcome of this project was the fact that they began to set guidelines for themselves through their experiences. They realized that they must act as a group of people to get the maximum benefits for each individual. There was a great temptation to "go it alone" once some people learned some organization and skills.

Setting
objectives &
goal
attainment
Development of
group conscious-
ness &
responsibility

The group also learned how to resolve conflicts: "We have learned we all have individual thoughts. Everyone has personal problems and we are all subject to human error. One member had money belonging to the group and used it for her own personal reasons. So when the rest of the group met we had to discuss the problem without each and everyone of us flying off the handle. As you may guess, this produced some lively reactions. (The Spice of Life.) We did agree to accept the member's own suggestion that she would do her own work in labour to pay back the money."

Conflict
resolution &
tension
reduction

The group has had spurts of trouble trying to maintain the quality of their crafts. During August, one member sent some dolls to a boutique in Kingston, Ontario, (O.C.F. order) without showing them to anyone else. They were poorly made and were not accepted by the store. It was suggested that she make them again, and send them on speculation. They were accepted and the manager of the store was pleased that the group was trying to improve. They realized from that experience that selling low quality crafts is detrimental to the group and they will never enhance their image that way.

Financial
management
problems

Keeping track of incoming and out-going money was a big problem for a few months. Lessons were taken on the organization of accounts. Since then, there has been no trouble with the bookkeeping.

Group
solves
communica-
tion
problems

Among some of the members, reading, writing and conversational skills in English were very low. People had to get to know who had the best skills in each area. The ones who were less skilled verbally began to learn not to be embarrassed and have been helped a bit by others. This is true especially in helping the Chinese members with English, and other members with spelling and writing. To begin to overcome the embarrassment of not being able to speak, read, spell, or write, was an important achievement.

Lack of
collective
responsi-
bility

Laziness was another major problem. Periodically, the work fell solely on the two managers. In June, the group agreed to sew a feather quilt for someone, took her downpayment, and in October when it had to be made, one person worked on it because the others said it was too hard on their fingers.

Some people took advantage of other people's talent and ideas. There was a reticence to experiment with new materials and ideas and, finally, to bring them for group appraisal.

A few people were not responsible in meeting deadlines for work to be completed. This held up orders and brought a tirade of words from those who met deadlines.

Quitting as
a means of
dealing
with
frustration

In the beginning, there was great temptation to quit. Almost every member has quit at one time or another, and has been asked back by others in the group. It was much easier to leave if problems became too difficult or too many demands were made. Quitting seems to be common in other groups in which members participate. They are beginning to realize that staying in a group and arguing their points is more valuable than just leaving. As new members are added to the initial group, the whole group becomes more stable and established.

There are of course many problems which remain for members of the group. All the women continue to be fearful around their contacts with business world. Telephoning new places, seeing new people, going to new shops, remains a comparatively disquieting experience.

They still have problems communicating what they want and what they don't want in a rational way. They experience anger when faced with conflict and frustration and need to improve more their problem solving skills.

There are many outside problems over which they have little control and these affect the workings of the group in a major way. Sickness plays a big part. Women may want to do more, but are not able to do so if family members are ill. With a lot of sickness in a family, lethargy and exhaustion usually follows. And it is not easy to keep rousing women to come to meetings and participate when they really aren't up to it.

External
variables
affecting
group
performance

PROGNOSIS

I will preface my remarks about the prognosis for the future of this group by reminding the reader this is a very complex situation and there are many variables to take into account.

The women have received many rewards from the group which I don't think they are willing to give up, mainly acknowledgement from other people that what they are doing is worthwhile. Friends are totally surprised when members are able to make beautiful things and get money for them too. They have realized self-worth and are now able to point to last year and its troubles and see how far they have come.

Self
actualization

Being part of an established group in the neighbourhood has also added prestige. When the Local Initiatives Program was announced, other groups in Grange Park were sure Community Crafts would receive money to further their project because it was a known group in the community, and its objectives seemed to fit the L.I.P. program.

Financially, they have been able to cover their costs of operating (labour, materials, transportation, commission, publicity, etc.) but have made only a small profit. They will probably be able to sustain themselves in the future at the same level. They paid themselves about \$1,300.00 from July 1 to December 31, 1971; spent about \$550.00 on materials and sundries; their income was about \$2,000.00 in sales, and their co-op balance is about \$140.00. There is still about \$1,000.00 in the bank.

Financial
success

The group has made some observations about the success of the project:

"To build a business requires time, (lots of it), money, learning in every direction and \$2,000.00 (a grant) seems just the same as a barrel full of water with a leak in it. It seems a lot when you first get it, but then you realize the expenses of labour, materials, the cost of printing, etc., so it is not so large after all."

But this project is not mainly a business venture. It is a learning process. Flourishing businesses have been started with \$2,000.00 because those people already had the imagination, education, skills, and confidence to compete in the market place. The people in this group are just beginning to learn the necessary skills in running a business and, above that, are learning to express their ideas to each other, to take responsibility, to develop craftsmanship, etc.

Community
development as
a multi-di-
mensional
experience

RELATIONSHIP WITH COMMUNITY AND OTHER RESOURCES

Community Crafts has had contact with many community resources (institutions, officials, media), some more helpful and beneficial than others.

The Ontario Craft Foundation has been the most consistently helpful agency, always ready to assist with advice and information. All crafts must be passed through a jury to be exhibited at the Foundation. There are always reasons given for work that has not been accepted.

The group has been in contact with all levels of government. The ward alderman was asked to assist the group in obtaining their lottery license, to raffle the quilt at the C.N.E. She obliged and the license was received a few days following application.

The M.P.P. of the provincial riding presented the \$2,000.00 grant to the group at the home of a member.

The riding's federal M.P. is now in contact with the group, through his executive assistant, as is the president of a local riding association in connection with the refusal of funds under the Local Initiatives Program.

The major contacts the group has had with newspapers have been with The Toronto Star Weekly Magazine and The Toronto Citizen, a bi-monthly citizens forum newspaper.

Relations
with the
media

The Toronto Star Weekly article appeared in the Nov. 20, 1971 issue. When the women in the group read it, they were furious. They said the reporter made them sound as though they were "stupid and helpless" and it looked like "I am a guardian angel or a missionary". They realized that no one has any control over what is written unless it is written by the people involved, or one has access to the copy before it gets printed. The article created some extremely uncomfortable moments for me. I found myself justifying to them why I was there. A few believed the inaccuracies and misquotations attributed to me because "if it's in the newspaper it must be true". The group's secretary also wrote a letter to the writer protesting the article. Neither of us received a reply.

Distortion
of facts by
the press

The Toronto Citizen reporter (August 19, 1971) also presented some inaccuracies, but was much more ready to listen to the group's concerns. The "Citizen" printed four free advertisements for the group.

C.B.C. - T.V. made a 10-minute film on the group in April 1971, and showed it on "Weekday". This film also presented a fairly accurate picture of what the group was trying to do at that point. A copy of the film was obtained and can be seen by contacting the Community Development Branch.

I have described the group's relationship with boutiques around Toronto. But they have a special relationship with one that opened in May 1971 right in the neighbourhood. One of the shops on Queen Street West sells a lot of crafts made by

people in the Grange Park area. The owners take stock on consignment and are therefore able to mark up the wholesale prices of items 25 percent, instead of the usual 100 percent, thereby making it easier for the public to buy good quality crafts. It also makes it easier for craftsmen to sell in greater numbers. Community Crafts members have always been able to communicate well with the owners, and feel free to walk down to the store anytime to collect a cheque or say hello.

The contact between Community Crafts and one of the settlement houses in the area has been an ambivalent one much of the time. At one point, people in the group asked if they could use a room and closet for storing bulky things. They were promised both, but nothing materialized. A few meetings were held there, but most people decided they preferred meeting in members' houses. They said they liked the personal atmosphere. On a positive note, during last summer, a community worker from the settlement house, brought three new Chinese women who decided to join the group. Also, a member from Newfoundland was hired by the settlement to do part-time community work in the neighbourhood.

Relationship
with social
agencies

Through contact with the community resources mentioned, this group feels that they are now able to call on specific people for help in solving specific problems.

THE ADAPTABILITY OF THE PROJECT

The basic idea of this project is a simple one. It has already been used and adapted to fit other groups and locations. The idea that people who need money to supplement their incomes can obtain it by using their craft skills has been demonstrated. The other part of the project is that people get to know other people in their community and learn to work together to achieve more than they would alone.

A woman on welfare from a small town in Alberta read the Toronto Star Weekly article and wrote to Community Crafts, asking for information on how to start a group in her town. The group wrote giving her some ideas and encouragement.

THE MEMBERS AND THE COMMUNITY

Community Crafts described themselves in a flyer that accompanied their merchandise.

"Community Crafts is a group of housewives of different nationalities, living on welfare or low incomes. We started in the Fall of 1970 with a couple of women gathering in our homes to explore craft ideas, teach each other, and talk over community and family problems. The idea arose that we could sell our crafts to help add income to our budgets. After trying to do this on our own and receiving a few orders from buyers, we realized that financially we were not able to keep producing. We applied for and received a small Grant from the Province of Ontario. We were then able to expand our group, involving more women in the community."

There was an initial negative reaction on the part of some group members to include the word "welfare" in the flyer. Some members didn't want the word "welfare" included because of the negative connotations of the word.

A vote was finally taken and the majority of the members wanted to include the word.

"Process"
leads to
community
awareness

At one point, a split occurred in the group between members who wanted to work for change in the neighbourhood within the context of Community Crafts, and those who wanted to keep Community Crafts strictly a craft group. This conflict was resolved in favour of keeping the group crafts oriented.

However, a few members have used Community Crafts as a springboard to branch out and become involved with other groups in the neighbourhood. One member is now very active in a residents association which concerns itself with encroaching development in the area. She has presented a brief to Toronto City Council in support of the residents' fight against developers' plans to tear down family-occupied houses. She has also appeared before the Ontario Municipal Board for the same reason.

Another member of Community Crafts goes with her to all the meetings, but is afraid to speak publicly. Both women have worked on a small community newspaper published by the area residents association. This deals primarily with neighbourhood news.

This demonstrates how task oriented community development can foster the emergence of indigenous leadership and lead to a greater involvement in the affairs of the community in which the process occurs. Such a process leads to self-actualization and confidence among persons who normally would be reluctant to participate in citizen activity.

IMPRESSIONS, COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Community Crafts has been an experiment. Even though there are a lot of problems confronting this group of people, the fact that they have been able to feel that they have achieved something; that they are in business, however small, is a major accomplishment.

Since the cost of this pilot project was relatively small (in government spending terms), I would like to see this experiment turned into practice, and see other groups set up in other cities and towns in the province. The benefits to people are large compared to the cost involved.

The government should be prepared to support and encourage poor people getting together, poor people who want to try to improve the condition of their lives, in whatever way they choose.

Money is important, but without support from people who have specific kinds of knowledge to help groups accomplish what they want, it is practically useless.

However, support should be forthcoming only if groups express a need for it. If they are able to do what they have to do alone, so much the better. The government should make more money available in the form of "seed funding" to aid and start groups.

During the year-and-a-half that I worked with the people in Community Crafts, I witnessed a process of learning, achievement and contribution. Although this project is small in comparison to other schemes and business ventures, the effort and rewards have been great. Any achievement in the area of dignifying people is important and meaningful.

It should continue.

